

DATE OF MEETING | APRIL 10, 2019 |

AUTHORED BY | SKY SNELGROVE, STENO COORDINATOR, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES |

SUBJECT | CLOSED CAPTIONING MEETINGS |

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To request that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve implementation of closed captioning for audio and video recorded meetings. |

### **Recommendation**

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with the implementation of closed captioning for audio and visually recorded meetings, and allocate \$ 22,400 for the annual license fee plus one-time implementation and start-up costs of \$2,900, to be funded from general taxation.

## **BACKGROUND**

| The City of Nanaimo first began to audio and video record meetings in 2009.

The City's meeting management program, eSCRIBE, offers the option of closed captioning meetings. eSCRIBE has provided a quote for the annual fees and implementation of closed captioning of meetings (Attachment A). As the City has two meeting locations (Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, and Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre) we will require two encoders. The annual cost for this service for two encoders is \$22,400, which does not include a one-time implementation and training fee estimated at \$2,900. It is anticipated that the annual fee will increase yearly. Council direction will be sought for any significant increase in future years.

If closed captioning is implemented, when viewing meeting recordings on the City's website, end users can use closed captioning or disable it based on user preferences. Viewers watching live Council meetings on Shaw TV would have the option to use closed captioning services through their cable boxes. The accuracy of closed captioning is estimated at 92% at inception with accuracy growing to 98% as vocabulary expands through service utilization.

Closed captioning provides users who are deaf or hard of hearing with an accessible option for viewing meeting recordings. After implementation, all City of Nanaimo meetings video and audio recorded would include this feature. Past meetings would not include this function.

If Council directs Staff to implement closed captioning it is anticipated that this feature could be operational within a week. |

## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with the implementation of closed captioning for audio and visually recorded meetings, and allocate \$22,400 for the annual license fee plus one-time implementation and start-up costs of \$2,900, to be funded from general taxation.
  - **Budget Implication:** The final 2019 – 2023 Financial Plan will be amended to include close captioning for audio and visually recorded meeting.
  - **Engagement Implication:** The City of Nanaimo strives to be accessible for all persons. This would potential increase public engagement.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with the implementation of closed captioning for audio and visually recorded meetings, and allocate \$22,400 for the annual license fee plus one-time implementation and start-up costs of \$2,900 to be funded from Council Contingency for the first year and general taxation each year thereafter.
  - **Budget Implication:**
    - i. Council Contingency currently has \$92,500 unallocated. After implementation of closed captioning \$67,200 would be available.
    - ii. The final 2019 – 2023 Financial Plan will be amended to include the annual license fee for 2022 – 2023 funded from general taxation.
  - **Engagement Implication:** The City of Nanaimo strives to be accessible for all persons. This would potential increase public engagement.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternate direction regarding closed captioning.

## **SUMMARY POINTS**

- The City's meeting management software eSCRIBE offers closed captioning services and has provided a quote for this service annually plus one-time implementation fee.
- Closed captioning functionality would apply to all Council and committee meetings audio and visually recorded.
- Viewers would have the option to turn closed captioning on or off based on preference.

## **ATTACHMENT**

Attachment A: eSCRIBE Quote

**Submitted by:**

Sky Snelgrove  
Steno Coordinator |

**Concurrence by:**

Sheila Gurrie  
City Clerk

Laura Mercer  
A/Director, Financial Services |